

[30 cont.] VON ZASTROW

113 and Vedder (1) report further:

1. Von Zastrow and Vedder, Die Buschmänner, pp. 412-413.

843 "It is absolutely against the rules to do anything by word or
754 deed to the pregnant woman that might make her angry. Her evil eye in this period is especially dangerous; her angry word or her curse has an even worse effect. Sores, illness, protracted suffering, and death are the consequences of the evil eye or the curse of a pregnant woman.

844 "It is customary to sever the umbilical cord with an instrument only when the blood no longer pulsates. The umbilical cord is not tied off. The afterbirth must be carefully and secretly buried. The life of the child would be greatly endangered if an animal found it or if a feared sorcerer could appropriate a piece of it."

881 As soon as the girls have their first menstruation (/n) (2),

2. Female genitalia (/n-i).

a celebration takes place, but in this tribe I was unable to learn any of the details. On this occasion, the women dance, clap their hands, and sing, "giriri, giriri, giriri, uhu, giriri uhu," and so forth.

Men may not be present at this celebration. In a Hei//om horde neighboring the !Kung, spirits are appealed to in all directions on the occasion of this celebration, so that the girl, as an adult, will find veldkost everywhere.

The existence of a true initiation for boys is denied (3).

- [114]
[124] 3. On this point I was either misunderstood or told a falsehood.

There is merely a kind of testing; an older man goes with the candidate or candidates on a hunting expedition. Under the supervision of the older person, the candidate must kill a specimen of large game. The animal is then brought to the sacred fire, at which the

[51 cont.]

out the root, but dies on the spot as a sacrifice taking the place of the person who wants the plant. Once one has it, there is no longer any danger. People take so much trouble to get it because of its following peculiarity: the demons, that is to say, evil spirits of wicked human beings who enter into the living and kill them unless help is quickly given, are driven out by this plant as soon as one so much as brings it near the patient."

It comes from a little bush (/gui-sa). It does not occur in the Bushman region visited by me, but farther to the north. It is only found accidentally. When the doctor wanders through the bush, he sometimes hears low talking. Soon he sees a track resembling that of a snake and showing traces of blood. The root walks upright on this track, like a stick. He may not attack it, because he would die immediately; instead he attempts to approach from the direction in which the magic root is walking, opens the medicine bag, and lets the little mandrake walk in. Then the bag is firmly closed and at home is hung on a tall tree. The mandrake may not be taken into the hut. Something like blood drips out of the bag. Early the next morning a great fire is made; women and children and everyone assemble, each one bringing his little buck horn to obtain from the doctor some of the medicine coming from the mandrake. The medicine is rubbed on the skin. Bushmen who live among the Whites may not take this medicine because they will become sick from it. -- The medicine or the magic that is given out by the mandrake has little effect on those who were treated in the manner described above, [52] but it has considerable effect in other cases. This medicine is used to kill enemies through magic at a distance. When a doctor goes to a horde that does not yet have this medicine, he carries the horn filled with it around his neck. Some of the mandrake's magic poison passes into anyone who looks at him.

When the doctor sits down, anyone who has looked at him keels over and dies unless he is helped. If this person is an enemy, the doctor simply goes away and does not trouble himself any

!KUNG

[52 cont.]

- 754 further. The belly of the unconscious person swells enormously.
 755 When all other procedures have proved futile and someone remembers that this or that doctor has the magic medicine, he is called in, takes some of his bloodlike fluid from his horn, and first smears his own feet and then rubs the patient's feet and, above all, the patient's stomach in a circular massage. Gradually the swelling recedes, the patient gets up, sits down, and is cured.

648 This story, based upon the fact that there are roots with bloodlike sap, became known by the farmers in a confused fashion and was the cause of the ridiculous fear of the secret poisons of the Bushmen that many farmers have.

15. The Elements

773 Heaven and earth, sun and moon, all was made by X'u,
 821 the great captain, the supreme being. In the sun-scorched deserts inhabited by the Bushmen, the sun is no dispenser of mercy. During the hot season even the Bushman is forced to remain in the shade in the daytime, because the sand is so hot that he cannot walk on it.

The sun was a daughter of man. The Bushmen had seen her, and the men had to carry this daughter, but since she burned with such heat on their shoulders, the men had to frequently change places. When the shoulders of all the men were burned, they left the sun lying in the bush and did not take her to the huts. This is the place from which the sun rose. She is from the great captain.

When the sun sets, she sits down on the earth to eat. When it is to be day, one of her shoulderblades goes to the other side of the world where it appears as the sun. The sun's rays (/gam ~~sh~~sn) are the arms of the sun. The eclipse of the sun (~~sh~~áo) is caused by the lions so that they can more easily eat human beings.

The Bushman becomes cheerful only when the cool of the evening arrives, and at the time of the full moon he celebrates his festivals. There is no question of moon worship, however, among the !Kung Bushmen I visited.

[62 cont.]

293 Like the prehistoric Bushmen, these people, too, wear forehead bands, into which the arrows are stuck during the hunt.

726 Dornan (p. 139) reports that the Kalahari Bushmen hold
754 dances before the start of a war, and on these occasions they shoot little poisoned arrows from equally small bows in the direction of the enemy or of the sun. They believe that in so doing they are killing the shadow spirit of the enemy. They do not like to give these miniature bows and arrows to anyone because they are afraid that they might come into the possession of their enemies and thus bring about their own deaths.

226 Fishing is still quite well developed among the Masarwa people. Stone walls are sometimes built in the river, in which weir-baskets are set, or they sit in the river bed next to one another with weir-baskets, while women and children drive the fish toward them. In smaller waterholes, grass and brush are piled up on one side. Then the Bushmen step into the water and push the grass wall ahead of them, thus driving the fish into a corner. Individual fish are also speared with the assagai. According to Hodson, the best fishermen are the Bakoba Bushmen on the Okovanggo. They have harpoons and rush nets that are drawn diagonally across the river.

278 G. A. Farini (3) had an opportunity to observe the

(113) 3. G. A. Farini, Durch die Kalahariwüste
[Through the Kalahari Desert], Leipzig, 1886.

manufacture of arrow poison in the Chanse Veld. The men gathered at a certain place; women were not allowed to be present. The sap was removed from about 30 to 40 poisonous bulbs by means
(535) of successive incisions and was collected in a pan. As each incision was made, the Bushmen danced in a circle, making a kind of grunt. Then a hyena hide was spread out with the hair side down, and on it was spread the contents of the bags that contained the dried heads of poisonous snakes, as well as two pieces of reed approximately 15 centimeters long. Then a number of freshly killed poisonous snakes were brought. The poison sacs were removed amidst singing and the clapping of hands. Meanwhile the pan containing the poison had been put on the fire and was boiling;

7 AVIN
NARON
#6600

[74 cont.]

776 one time as a man and at another time as a woman.

7. Medicine

757 The curing practices of the Nogau Bushmen are very primitive. They have nothing for snakebite and nothing for arrow poison.

278 Eland fat is a universal medicine. For the common eye inflammations this fat is smeared into the eye; for headaches warm eland fat is dripped into the ear; for a cold the nostrils and nose are smeared with eland fat.

753 Sickness comes either from the evil head Gauab or from sorcerers. The ailment is caused by a little Gauab who has settled
(754) in the body. The more gravely ill a person is, the more Gauana have entered into him. The doctors are able to draw out these
755 spirits of sickness; they do it in a fashion analogous to that practiced by the !Kung. There are also female doctors.
756

753 The spirits of sickness are regarded here as much more material than among the !Kung; such a Gauab looks like a human
756 being, but he may also appear as a lion, a wildebeest, or a snake. Once the Gauab has been drawn out of the body, it runs away and speaks to no one.

756 The sorcerers in particular like to transform themselves into
(825) lions. Among the Bushmen farther north [75] it is supposedly the case that when they see a wildebeest in the bush, for example, it is not a wildebeest at all, but a Gauab. The doctors receive their power from the highest Gauab (/gaua //gaicha). He is the one who appears in the wind spouts. As among the Bantu, the doctors must go to school for several years with older colleagues.
(754) They are not only able to cure, but also to practice magic in the bad sense, in that they induce /Gaua //gaicha to make ill anyone whom they want to harm.

"Whoever wants to become a sorcerer must go to school with another witch doctor. When someone is struck by lightning, it is said that Gauab struck him down with his knife. Some then become great doctors and often speak with Gauab. Gauab also comes as a wind spout."

NARON
Nogau
TAUIN

[75 cont.]

754 Among the Naron, according to Miss Bleek, the Bushman
411 revolver is also in use. The doctors fight one another with it.
Such an arrow is secretly shot at the opponent's kaross, and through
the magic emanating from the arrow, the enemy falls sick and
dies.

8. Death and Burial

761 The Nogau have the following conceptions: Death is
caused by Gauab, who steals the soul and makes a little Gauab
764 of it. The dead person is buried immediately; there is no
dancing, only weeping. The corpse is tied in a crouching posi-
tion and buried on its side with the head toward the east. Only
the sleeping blanket is placed in the grave; the weapons that
were left behind are kept by the brothers. The food that the
deceased was carrying with him is thrown on the grave. Then
bushes are placed on it.

(775) In their opinion the soul of the deceased, which has been
769 transformed into a Gauab, wanders around near the grave; there-
fore they detour around it. When a Nogau Bushman passes the
grave of a tribal member, he prays to him for help in hunting so
that the children will grow fast and become fat. He says:

[534] "I do not know how it will go with me
With the food, how it will go with me with the food;
I do not know what I should do to get something to eat,
Let us eat and become big."

775 On the other hand, there is also the belief that the great
Gauab who kills a human being eats the heart or keeps it in cold
water and finally makes a new Bushman of it. Among the Naron
764 the corpse is tied in a crouching position and buried on his side
with the face toward the east. These customs are by no means
always observed, however, especially when the ground is hard.
The Naron do not fear the spirits of the dead, although the doctors
769 see them, as do those men "who have incisions between the eye-
767 brows." As we know from the Nogau, this includes all who have
taken part in the boys' initiation. Women can never see such
spirits.

Among all three tribes, old people are exposed to die.

The Bushmen

35

Bushmen believe that certain famous sorcerers, once medicine men who chose to be poisoners and magicians instead of healers, have taken the form of certain lions, which can always be distinguished from ordinary lions by their great size and their ability to float in the air. Also, Bushmen say, the eclipses of the moon are caused by lions, as on very bright nights a lion may cover the moon's face with a great paw, giving himself darkness for better hunting. [221]

Usually, when a lion sees you, he skulks away or bounds off in great, ungainly leaps, in clumsy dodges, making a fool of himself because he is frightened; but when one raises his head and looks right at you, then turns as this one did, and walks off without even looking back, you understand at once why Bushmen believe the things they do.

As the lion walked away into a thicket of acacia trees we climbed off the truck and followed him. It was rash of us, but we were not afraid of him. We wanted a photograph. However, he had disappeared, and as we were looking cautiously around among the trunks of little trees we heard a motor roaring, gears grinding; and finally, as we watched, the jeep arrived with Cass and Bob (Dr. Story), who told us to go back to camp as fast as we could. Two Bushmen had arrived.

We started back at once and got there late in the afternoon, and there we found them, two small men, one old, one young, in silhouette as they squatted by the fire, turning as we came to look at us, very nervous and very ill at ease. They had been given food and tobacco—a blue cloud hung above their heads—and a bucket of water, but during the course of the afternoon they had drunk the bucket dry. As Theunis and Gishc, the only people who could have spoken to both them and us, had been away, the rest of the expedition had had to wait anxiously for our return, unable to communicate a single word.

(the same word as the title of respect). The !Kung say it is strong medicine: 776
/num. The !Kung take for granted his giving to man both sickness and 753
the power to cure it, and account for the power's sometimes failing to cure 778
by saying that the all-powerful god allows it to work, or not, according 785
to his pleasure.

He gives the curing power to medicine men (called num kxao, medicine 778
owners), appearing to them (usually in dreams, sometimes in what seem 786
to be waking hallucinations) and putting the power into them. He has also [533]
put a curing power in the medicine songs that the people sing at the dances,
songs named Rain, Sun, Giraffe, Eland, Honey, Buffalo, Mamba, and Spider
—all powerful things. The great god gives the power freely. It is rare to find
a man among the !Kung who is not a medicine man. The function of the 786
medicine men is only to cure. They are not sorcerers or witch doctors. (The [534] ●
!Kung are not a witch-ridden people.) !Kung medicine men receive no re-
wards or special prerogatives. They work together apparently without rivalry.
The medicine men may cure at any time but their strongest curing occurs [535]
at the dance.

Whether or not anyone is sick, the people dance two or three times a 535
month, sometimes more often. Anyone who wants a dance may start one 781
simply by asking people to come and begin. The !Kung like to dance for
many reasons. There is the inherent physical pleasure in moving to rhythm.
Music and dancing are their arts, from which their aesthetic pleasure comes. [537]
The dances are also social gatherings in which all participate, men, women, 535
children, visitors—everybody. A dance draws them together as nothing else 781
does. Even more important is the fact that the dance is one concerted re- 571
ligious act of the !Kung and brings people into such unison that they become
like an organic being.

At the dances not only may the sick be cured, but pending evil and mis- 535
fortune averted. The !Kung believe that the great god may send /Gaiwa or 785
the /gaiwasi at any time with ill for someone and that these beings may be 751
lurking, awaiting their chance to inflict it. The medicine men in the dances
combat them, drive them away, and protect the people.

Usually there are several medicine men performing at the same time. 785
To cure they go into trance, which varies in depth as the ceremony proceeds.
The curing cannot be described in words; it must be heard. When a man
begins, he leaves the line of dancing men and, still singing, leans over the
person he is going to cure, going eventually to every person present, even the
infants. He places one hand on the person's chest, one on his or her back, and
flutters his hands. The !Kung believe that in this way he draws the sickness,
real or potential, out of the person through his own arms into himself. To
demonstrate that this is in fact going on and is hard to do, he grunts with
shuddering grunts that intensify in tempo and pitch into shrieks and reach a
high piercing, quavering yell. Finally, the medicine man throws up his arms

SEXUAL LIFE AND MARRIAGE III

when the wife is too old; she may then simply be sent back to her people. Generally, however, she stays with her husband, who then takes a second wife, younger and more active. The children of a divorced woman remain with their father, and are brought up by his new wife.¹ Among the Heikum separation of husband and wife may take place under various circumstances, as when the woman is childless, but this, says Fourie, is entirely a matter for adjustment between them. The wife on separation returns to her own group; the present made to her mother at marriage is not returned to the husband. The children are looked upon as belonging to the father, but if husband and wife should separate the girls, according to Fourie, are taken by the father and the sons by the mother.² This statement runs counter to those given above about what happens in the other North-Western tribes under similar circumstances, and is almost certainly inaccurate. [586] [595] [114]

Among the Namib Bushmen divorce may result only from barrenness or adultery, and is at the discretion of the husband. If he decides to separate from his wife, he brings her back to her parents. The mature children remain with him, while the youngsters who have to go with their mother also come to him when grown up. After divorce both parties are at liberty to marry again as soon as they wish.³

Marriage is, of course, also dissolved by the death of either husband or wife. As a rule the survivor may remarry. Among the Bushmen of Basutoland, however, a widow is said to have found it difficult to get a second husband, owing perhaps, writes Arbousset,⁴ to the popular belief that most of the deaths which occurred were due to witchcraft rather than disease. On the other hand, great attention was paid to her in the camp, where no piece of game was ever eaten without her having a share. [587] [589] [754] [761]

Further north this fear of marriage with a widow is not found. Among the Naron she may, if she likes, marry her late husband's brother, but need not necessarily do so; she is quite at liberty to marry another man. If she remarries, and if young enough most widows do so, her new husband is expected to look after the children; otherwise the duty falls upon their father's brother. An unmarried widow may stay near her late husband's people, or return to her own group, as she pleases.⁵ Widows among the Auen may also marry [184] [736] [587]

¹ Kaufmann, "Die Auen," 197.² "Customs of the Heikum," 60.³ Trenk, op. cit., 168; Seydel, op. cit., 101.⁴ Op. cit. (English trans.), 364.⁵ D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 34; *idem*, "Bushman Terms of Relationship," 67.

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION AND MAGIC

DEATH AND BURIAL

771 In discussing the social customs and economic life of the Bushmen we have had occasion to note incidentally various usages and beliefs, connected for instance with puberty and especially with food, which point to the existence of some conception of supernatural agencies, and indicate how intimately religion really enters into the everyday activities of the people. The customs and beliefs associated with death afford a further insight into the religion of the Bushmen, for we meet here with their ideas of a future state as well as of spiritual beings.

539 The origin of death is recorded in the fable of the Moon and the
773 Hare, which is told with some variation by all the Bushman and
[761] Hottentot tribes, as well as by certain Bantu peoples. The version found among the Cape Bushmen states that the Moon once appeared to the young Hare, telling him not to cry at the death of his mother, for she was not really dead but sleeping, and would return again living, just as the Moon dies and returns again living. But the young Hare did not believe this, and continued to cry, saying that the Moon was deceiving him, whereupon the Moon, infuriated, cursed the Hare and cleft his lip. In another, more widespread, rendering the Moon instructs the Hare to deliver the following message to mankind: "As I die and return again, so shall man die and return again." The Hare distorts the message and tells the men that they will die and not return again. The Moon curses the Hare and cleaves his lip, but ever since then death has existed on earth.¹

761 There is not much information regarding the Bushman beliefs as to the actual causes of death. The Cape Bushman apparently recognized that deaths could occur purely by accident, as in the case of a wound from a poisoned arrow, the bite of a lion or leopard, starvation, etc. On the other hand, there was also a strong belief

¹ Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 9-10; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 16 sqq.; D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 44-5; Dorman, *Pygmies and Bushmen*, 172.

DEATH AND BURIAL

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that sorcerers could bewitch and thus kill a person, while the breach of certain prescribed rules of conduct connected especially with the rain was held to lead automatically to death.¹ The Auen make a distinction between people who die a "good death", i.e. easily and without great preceding pains, and those who die in great agony. The former are regarded as dying a natural death, the latter as bewitched or possessed.² Further north, among the Kung, it is believed that death may be caused by certain spirits known as *dsao*, who are sent by the spirits of the dead (*//gauab*) to enter the bodies of people and thus make them sick; while men who speak evil of the "great chief" *Xu* may be killed by him through the medium of lightning.³ With the Hiechware, again, no death is ever the result of natural causes. It is brought about by witchcraft or the malevolent power of enemies. "It is strange," says Dorman,⁴ "how the old and decrepit people, who must know that their time in this world will be short, cling tenaciously to this belief. It is useless to argue with them upon the question. They will tell you that they know of many people who died by the powerful medicine of their enemies."

It is a well-known feature of primitive peoples that they are not satisfied with what we call natural causes of death, and that whenever a death occurs there is a belief that some sorcerer or some supernatural agency has been the cause of it. That such a belief also exists among the Bushmen is obvious from the statements given above, but more detailed information on this point is very desirable, especially as to the extent to which purely natural causes are recognized.

If death comes to a Bushman in normal times he is buried with all his possessions not far from his hut, generally in the posture in which he sleeps, i.e. on one side, with the knees drawn up against the breast. This is the posture desired both north and south, and often met with in excavations of Bushman graves. Everywhere, however, Bushmen are also found buried in all sorts of other postures; evidently time and means for a proper burial have not always been forthcoming. In some cases, too, burial is impossible or even refused. The Auen, e.g., bury only those people who have died "good deaths"; the

¹ Bleek, op. cit., 14, 16, 19; Lloyd, *Further Bushman Material Collected*, 15, 16, 21, 22; Bleek and Lloyd, op. cit., 393 sqq.

² Kaufmann, "Die Auen," 158.

³ Lebzelter, "Bei den (Kun-Buschleuten)," 15; *idem*, "Religiösen Vorstellungen der //Kun-Buschmänner," 407, 409.

⁴ Op. cit., 144.

756 supernatural powers, or who are able to control, either for social purposes or for their own ends, the spiritual forces upon which the social welfare depends. There is no English word which adequately describes them, but such persons may be loosely termed magicians.

Among the Cape Bushmen, these magicians, who might be of either sex, were called /gixa (plural, /gisen). There is unfortunately [114] no information available as to how they acquired their powers, nor have we any clear description of the part they played in the life of the community. A few details about them may, however, be gathered from the texts collected by Bleek and Lloyd. Some magicians were [821] rainmakers, who went out to catch the rain bull and lead it over the land bringing rain. Others, again, had special powers over particular [825] game animals, such as the springbok or the ostrich. Some magicians were able to assume and go about in the form of animals such as the lion, springbok, jackal, or a little bird; others, even when asleep, knew what was going about at night, and took care of the people, defending them from evil magicians. For some magicians could [754] cause illness by shooting with invisible arrows, and the patients would die, even though doctored; while some were said to eat the flesh of the dead. When a magician died an earthquake took place, [823] and his heart fell, as a shooting star, out of the sky into a waterhole. His powers, however, he continued to possess even after death, [775] for there are mentioned several occasions on which a dead rainmaker was asked to send rain or a game magician to give success in hunting.¹

These beliefs, fragmentary as they are, show definitely that the magicians were held to possess supernatural powers, which they might use for good or evil; but, apart perhaps from the making of rain, there is nothing to link them up with any cult or public ceremony, or to indicate that they ever played the part of priests.

[184] Among the Naron and Auen, however, the magicians, as we have seen, function at the puberty ceremonies. They introduce [881] *Hisha* into the dances, and make the cuts between the eyebrows of the boys. [793] Among the Naron they are also the priests, who pray to the New Moon for rain; while among the Auen they make rain by sprinkling [821] on the ground a kind of red earth, which they fetch from afar and carry about with them. The magicians, both male and female, are

MAGIC AND MAGICIANS

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by *Gaua* 'on the other side' into the use of the small magic quiver. 773
Tji-Tji had killed a gemsbok. *Gaua* arrived on the scene and said, 'I have come to you; you need not be afraid; both of us can sleep here.' After having consumed the animal and slept *Tji-Tji* remarked to *Gaua*, 'Give me that stuff (*//ai*).' The latter replied, 'If I give you the *//ai*, what will you pay me?' *Tji-Tji* answered, 'I will give you the horns.' *Gaua* then took the horns, made the little arrows out of them, invested them with *//ai* and before departing taught *Tji-Tji* the *//ai* dance. From that time the Bushmen have known how to use magic."

The small magic quiver and arrows to which reference is here made are no doubt the miniature weapons found among all the North-Western tribes. In a set seen by the writer the bow, made of a piece of bone, was barely 10 cm. long, and the arrows, for which sharp thorns were used, were small in proportion. Similar arrows described by other writers consisted of a stalk of grass about 6 cm. long and a head of bone or hard wood about 4 cm. long. This head was sharpened at the end inserted into the grass stalk, while the protruding end was blunted. 754
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411
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[184]

The range of these arrows is of course very limited, and different suggestions have been put forward as to their use. They are certainly not children's toys, as these miniature bows and arrows are used only by men, who carry them concealed about their persons. From various descriptions it appears that in some cases the arrows are definitely poisoned, and consequently among Germans the name "Bushman revolver" has become applied to these miniature sets. It is claimed that they are used as real weapons and that the poison on the arrow is strong enough to bring about the death of anybody struck by it. On the other hand, Miss Bleek says that among the Naron they are not poisoned, but are used by magicians who quarrel among themselves to settle their differences. "A medicine man wishing to destroy another, comes up close and shoots at the opponent's kaross with one of these arrows, blunt end foremost. The missile falls harmlessly to the ground, but the victim dies of the magic."² This statement is supported by the report of a case tried at Windhoek in 1912, where it was maintained, inter alia, that a poisoned arrow of this kind had been used against the accused. In the evidence, however, it was stated by several witnesses that these

¹ Schapera, "Bows and Arrows of the Bushmen," 116-17, and references.

² Naron, 28.

114 arrows are not poisoned but are used for "witchcraft", and "if
411 they are shot in the direction of an enemy, be he 100 kilos or more
● 754 away, witchcraft will bring about his death".¹ The myth recorded
756 by Fourie also lends support to the idea that these arrows are used
for magical purposes. It is possible, too, that something similar
is implied in the statement, mentioned above, that among the Cape
Bushmen magicians caused illness by shooting with invisible arrows,
but it should be noted that no such weapons as those here described
have yet been found among them.

789 Apart from the special magic practised by magicians and associated
with them, there are among all the Bushmen various usages and
beliefs of a nature which may be generally termed magical, and which
224 are apparently common property. Many of the hunting observances
787 already described fall into this category. So, too, does divination.
[184] Among the Cape Bushmen this occurs principally in the form of
beliefs in the efficacy of omens, of which there are a great number
with diverse significations. They say they feel in their bodies that
certain things are going to happen; there is a kind of beating of the
flesh which tells them things. Those who are stupid do not under-
stand these teachings and disobey them, with the result that they get
into trouble, are killed by a lion, and so on. These beatings tell
those who understand them which way not to go, and which arrow
it is better not to use, and also warn them when people are coming.
They inform the hunter when game is close at hand, tell people
where they can find the person for whom they are in search, i.e. which
way to go, and so on.²

184 In the more northerly tribes is found the use of pieces of wood,
leather or bone as divining bones or dice. These are usually four
787 in number, and roughly triangular in shape, two of them being broad,
the other two longer and thinner. The former are called male,
the latter female. In the Eastern Kalahari they are usually each
marked in a special way and named, but this is not found further west.
The bones may be owned and used by anyone, not only by magicians.
They are used in a very crude manner: the inquirer goes on throwing
them on to his kaross until he gets a favourable answer. Such bones
are frequently found among the Northern and Central Kalahari
Bushmen, and occasionally among those dwelling on the southern

¹ *Reports on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany* (Cd. 9146), 1918, p. 172.

² Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 17-18; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 330-9.